



State of Illinois
Bruce Rauner, Governor



Illinois Department of Transportation
Randall S. Blankenhorn, Secretary

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CONTACT:
Brian Williamsen 309.671.4854
Gianna Uργο 312.814.4693

Traveling for Memorial Day? Time to Buckle Up

IDOT, law enforcement campaign coincides with increase in traffic fatalities

SPRINGFIELD – The Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT), Illinois State Police (ISP) and hundreds of local law enforcement agencies throughout the state are vowing to crack down on seat belt law violators and impaired drivers this Memorial Day weekend. An increased number of patrols will be out in force 24/7, with a focus on late-night hours when unbuckled and impaired driving fatalities are at their highest.

The stepped-up enforcement comes as traffic fatalities are on the rise in Illinois and throughout the country. Last year, according to provisional data, 998 people lost their lives on Illinois roads, the highest total in seven years. As of May 20, 372 people have died in crashes, a nearly 18 percent increase in one year.

Heavier travel during summer months is often followed by an increase in motor vehicle fatalities. Last year, 13 people died in 12 crashes during the Memorial Day weekend.

“We are very concerned about the upturn of motor-vehicle fatalities in Illinois,” said Illinois Transportation Secretary Randy Blankenhorn. “To start getting those numbers going in the opposite direction, we encourage everyone to take one critical action that can save them in a crash – buckle up. Don’t make this holiday weekend a tragic one.”

According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, more than half of traffic fatalities involve someone not properly buckled up.

The federally funded *Click It or Ticket* enforcement period allows police to provide additional patrols that will include more than 50 roadside safety checks, with half of the patrols taking place during the nighttime hours. The *Click It or Ticket* program’s goal is to change behavior by strongly enforcing seat belt laws. Motorists choosing not to buckle up in every seating position will be ticketed. Impaired drivers will be arrested.

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